A/AC.
240/
1992/
L.2

READEX
FICHE

UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.240/1992/L.2
17 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR
THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

OBSERVANCE OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Note by the Secretariat

I. DECISIONS OF UNITED NATIONS ORGANS

1. Pursuant to General Assembly decision 46/472 of 13 April 1992, a Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations has been established consisting of the members of the General Committee and open to the participation of all Member States.

2. The decision entrusts the Preparatory Committee with the task of considering and recommending to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session proposals for suitable activities in connection with the observance of the Anniversary, on the understanding that its decisions will be taken by consensus. This signals the official commencement of preparations for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

II. FIRST MEETING OF THE PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

A. Election of the officers of the Bureau

3. The first meeting of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary took place on 22 October 1992 at 10 a.m. in the Trusteeship Council Chamber. The officers of the Bureau were elected by acclamation, as follows:

Chairman: The Permanent Representative of Australia, His Excellency Mr. Richard Butler, AM

Vice-Chairmen: The Permanent Representative of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr. Svetlomir V. Baev
The Permanent Representative of Chile, His Excellency Mr. Juan Somavia
The Permanent Representative of Malaysia, His Excellency Mr. Razali Ismail
The Permanent Representative of Oman, His Excellency Mr. Salim Bin Mohammed Al-Khussaiby
The Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Poland, Dr. Zbigniew Wlosowicz

Rapporteur: The Permanent Representative of Jamaica, Her Excellency Dr. Lucille Mathurin Mair

4. The election of the two officers representing the Group of African States and the one remaining for the Group of Western European and Other States will take place at the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee, on 30 November 1992.

B. Opening statement by the Secretary-General

5. A note verbale by the Secretary-General was sent to the Permanent Representatives of all Member States inviting them to participate in the meeting of the Preparatory Committee on a full and equal basis with members of the General Committee.

6. One hundred and seventeen Member States, including members of the General Committee, were represented at the first meeting, on 22 October 1992. The Secretary-General delivered the opening statement, in which he emphasized that the Fiftieth Anniversary signalled the beginning of a new era in the life of the Organization. He highlighted, in addition, the following points:

(a) The role of the Fiftieth Anniversary in providing an opportunity to implement various reforms of the structure and work of the United Nations;

(b) The importance of the media in ensuring the active participation of the broad constituency of the United Nations in the commemoration;

(c) The potential establishment of National Committees in each Member State for the purpose of coordinating anniversary preparations and promoting a truly global celebration;

(d) Coordination with the specialized agencies, some of which will celebrate their own anniversaries in 1995, to ensure system-wide attention to the commemoration.

C. Views expressed by Member States

7. At its 1st meeting, the Committee held a debate in the course of which the following 23 Member States expressed their views regarding the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary: Mexico, Comoros, Mauritania, Turkey, Armenia, Uruguay, United States of America, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Philippines, France, Egypt, Austria, Iran (Islamic Republic of), United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Venezuela, Russian Federation, Barbados, Afghanistan, Slovenia, Sierra Leone, Costa Rica and Bulgaria. The Chairman of the Committee also made a statement.

8. The views, assessments and recommendations of the Secretary-General in his opening statement were supported in these subsequent statements by various representatives. He was also congratulated for his report entitled, "Agenda for peace" (A/47/277-S/24111), which was recommended, inter alia, as a guide for the reforms to be considered as the Organization prepares for its Fiftieth Anniversary.

9. These statements brought into focus two major aspects of the forthcoming Fiftieth Anniversary that the Preparatory Committee may wish to consider:

(a) The nature and purpose, including any action to be taken by the General Assembly, of a commemorative session of the Assembly in 1995;

(b) Projects, programmes and activities on a world-wide basis designed to celebrate, communicate, inform and educate the public about the United Nations on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary.

III. ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY AT ITS COMMEMORATIVE SESSION IN 1995

10. In accordance with the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, Member States are provided with the opportunity to present speeches in the general debate format. The rules of procedure further stress "the importance of participation by Heads of State or Government, Ministers for Foreign Affairs and other high officials as a means of enhancing the significance of the general debate". In that connection, the Preparatory Committee might wish to highlight the particular importance of participation at this high level in 1995, since it is hoped that Member States will make appropriate reference to the Fiftieth Anniversary in their statements during the general debate.

11. In addition, the Preparatory Committee might wish to recommend that heads of State or Government participate in a commemorative session of the General Assembly, to be held for a short period and culminating on 24 October 1995. In order to enable Governments of Member States and the Secretariat to make arrangements for a commemorative session, it would be very useful for the Preparatory Committee to begin considering the questions of timing, duration, substance and possible documentary outcome of the session, as well as subsequent and related actions to be taken by the General Assembly.

12. The question of the timing of and relationship between the general debate in 1995 and a commemorative session would need to be considered.

IV. COMMEMORATIVE PROGRAMMES AND ACTIVITIES RELATING TO THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

A. Programmes and activities currently in progress

13. A number of programmes and activities are currently being developed in connection with the Fiftieth Anniversary. They range from feature films and musical performances to publications and educational programmes and include, inter alia:

(a) A pictorial history of the United Nations, with photographs capturing various significant events in the life of the Organization. The photographs will possibly be included in an exhibit to be sponsored by the International Photographic Council;

(b) A picture book on art treasures of the United Nations, tentatively titled They Came Bearing Gifts. The publication will feature photographs of art work currently housed in United Nations offices around the world and in the Archives;

(c) A full-length feature film for young people entitled, "Rocking the Global Village", featuring young musicians from around the world who compose and perform pieces that present various United Nations issues. The film release will be accompanied by a music video, educational book and global promotional tour;

(d) A United Nations-related film series at the Museum of Modern Art, New York City, in July and August of 1995. The series will highlight both United Nations documentaries as well as the presentation of United Nations issues in other films;

(e) A donation to the United Nations of a set of privately owned signature pages of the Charter. The pages, which were discovered by chance among some discarded documents, will be presented to the United Nations during the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Charter's signing in 1995;

(f) An international poster competition at the United Nations, tentatively entitled "Fifty posters - Fifty years". Fifty entries by professional artists will be judged by an honourary panel over a three-day period and possibly exhibited at museums around the world.

B. Programmes and activities to be considered

14. There are, in addition, a number of programmes and activities that could lend themselves appropriately to the commemoration of the Fiftieth

Anniversary. The Preparatory Committee may therefore wish to consider proposing:

(a) A substantive book examining the history, structure and functions of the United Nations. A broad range of distinguished scholars, authors, and political leaders could contribute chapters to the publication;

(b) A public service announcement with film footage capturing United Nations work around the world. Some material is available from the Archives and Video Service, but the segment could also be created by a well-known producer outside the Organization;

(c) Use of an FM radio frequency for United Nations broadcasts. The Organization has often utilized a radio frequency in the past; it could seek facilities, management and technical/programmatic assistance in order to renew this valuable form of communication;

(d) A series of television vignettes capturing significant or dramatic moments in the history of the United Nations. The vignettes could be broadcast world wide each day during the year prior to the Anniversary, using entertainers and prominent world leaders as hosts;

(e) International Emmy Awards, to be judged and presented at the United Nations. The ceremony could recognize excellence in television programming around the world by awarding prizes in different geographical categories;

(f) A world-wide touring exhibition project, featuring United Nations memorabilia and commemorative displays. The exhibit could perhaps be organized by a major public relations agency and could travel to major cities on the five continents;

(g) A children's project involving the exchange of ribbon banners, quilt squares or other mementos among schoolchildren in all Member States. Each school or group could trade one of its own mementos for that of another country and then exhibit the entire collection during the Fiftieth Anniversary;

(h) A performance by the New York Philharmonic Orchestra in honour of the Fiftieth Anniversary, with the possibility of a live television broadcast. The concert could take place in conjunction with United Nations Day, perhaps at Lincoln Center, followed by a formal evening event. Major orchestras in other countries could also be approached to perform in a similar venue;

(i) A parade of tall ships in the East River in 1995 in honour of the United Nations and its Member States, with a gala evening event to follow. The parade could be organized in a manner similar to the annual parade of ships in New York Harbour on Independence Day;

(j) A week-long series of performances in the Public Lobby by various vocal and instrumental groups from around the world. Performers could

include, for example, the South Wales Male Choir, which has offered to perform at the United Nations in connection with the Fiftieth Anniversary;

(k) The development of a unified educational curriculum including the history, structure and function of the United Nations. Global implementation would be an ideal project for collaboration between the United Nations and the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization;

(l) A series of commemorative medals. As on the occasion of the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary, Member States could consider striking a series of medals in honour of the Fiftieth Anniversary.

V. ACTION BY THE SECRETARIAT

A. The Secretary-General

15. The Secretary-General held meetings with various United Nations Associations and received communications from a number of non-governmental organizations assuring him of their readiness to cooperate in the observance of the Fiftieth Anniversary and submitting specific proposals to that effect.

16. The Secretary-General indicated in various meetings that the present financial crisis at the United Nations would preclude the availability of adequate funds from the regular budget to support new programmes and activities for the Fiftieth Anniversary. In order to provide the appropriate financial support, the Secretary-General therefore established a separate Trust Fund to receive voluntary contributions from individual, corporate and governmental sources for commemorative programmes and activities.

B. Other bodies

17. The Secretary-General initiated discussions with members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination regarding preparations for the commemoration. The Committee, as a result, included an item on the Fiftieth Anniversary in its agenda for the spring session, with the purpose of considering programme proposals and promoting a system-wide celebration. At this session the Committee will assist in mobilizing the contributions of the various organizations of the United Nations system to the commemoration.

18. Furthermore, the members of the Joint United Nations Information Committee (JUNIC) received at their meeting from 7 to 9 July 1992 a report by the Department of Public Information (JUNIC/199[illegible]/16) on the status of preparations for the Fiftieth Anniversary. The members were asked to consider the report and convey their recommendations for possible joint activities for the commemoration.

VI. ACTION BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

19. Recognizing their potential role in preparing for the Fiftieth Anniversary, a number of non-governmental organizations indicated their interest in coordinating efforts with the Secretariat to develop programmes for the commemoration.

20. Discussions commenced with the World Federation of United Nations Associations, whose national and local chapters could create a global network for the commemoration. Among their proposals was the development of a "United Nations Rose" in honour of the anniversary: a leading rose grower, Harkness New Roses Ltd. of Hitchin, England, was commissioned to create a new peach blend variety.

21. Additional meetings took place with Rotary Club International to discuss, among other proposals, the establishment of a task force for the Fiftieth Anniversary comprised of Rotarian leaders world wide.

VII. ACTION BY SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF THE UNITED NATIONS

22. Following discussions with the Secretary-General and the Director-General of the Universal Postal Union, the Executive Council of the Union, at its session in April and May 1992, adopted recommendation CE 2/1992:

> "Recognizing that the Universal Postal Union, as a specialized agency of the United Nations, must make its contribution to the events that are to mark this anniversary,
>
> "Recommends that postal administrations make provision, in their 1995 issue programme, for a stamp to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations."

VIII. CITY OF NEW YORK

23. The New York City Commission for the United Nations and Consular Corps, in cooperation with the Office of the Mayor of New York, declared its intention to establish a city-wide committee to coordinate local governmental preparations for the celebration of the Fiftieth Anniversary. The Commission indicated that a meeting including City and United Nations officials would be arranged in the near future to discuss the organization of the committee.

IX. CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

24. The City of San Francisco requested the Secretary-General's endorsement of its commemoration, on 26 June 1995, of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the signing of the United Nations Charter. The UN50 Committee was established in 1991 to coordinate the development of commemorative programmes and activities. The Office of the Mayor designated in addition two Honorary Chairmen, Mr. George Schultz and Mr. Tom Clausen, for the city-wide celebration. Plans for the commemoration include, inter alia:

(a) An ecumenical worship service on the Sunday before the Anniversary;

(b) A ceremony at which representatives of United Nations Member States will recommit themselves to the principles of the Charter;

(c) A month-long series of festivals, street fairs and cultural events;

(d) Commemorative performances at the War Memorial Performing Arts Complex;

(e) A pilot programme to include formal study of the United Nations in the curricula of Bay Area schools.

25. The San Francisco Foundation, among other organizations, provided seed money to develop a number of the programmes planned for 1995.

X. OBSERVATIONS ON QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE COMMEMORATION OF THE FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY

26. In order to facilitate the work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, and in response to the wish expressed by several delegations, the Secretariat submits herewith some observations on questions which the Preparatory Committee may wish to consider during its work.

27. The precise Anniversary date is 24 October, that is, the date of the entry into force of the Charter of the United Nations pursuant to General Assembly resolution 168 (II) of 31 October 1947. This date was proclaimed United Nations Day, which in resolution 2782 (XXVI) of 6 December 1971 was declared an international holiday that should be "observed as a public holiday by all States Members of the United Nations".

28. While previous commemorations were often limited to United Nations Day, the concept of the anniversary has grown to include the duration of the General Assembly session and, indeed, the entire year. It is therefore conceivable that activities could be planned for any time during 1995.

29. It is anticipated that Member States of the United Nations will wish to plan special events during 1995. While several Member States already host special events on the annual United Nations Day, the significance of the Fiftieth Anniversary will lend itself appropriately to the hosting of such activities by all Member States. The Preparatory Committee may in that respect consider recommending that Member States establish National Committees for the commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary.

30. The Fiftieth Anniversary provides an opportunity to address various long-term goals of the Organization. The Preparatory Committee may wish therefore to consider these objectives in recommending programmes for the commemoration. They include:

(a) Promoting greater public awareness of the history, structure and functions of the United Nations;

(b) Reaching the Organization's near-universal constituency through "popularization" of its public image;

(c) Improving world-wide education about the United Nations, particularly at the younger grade levels;

(d) Highlighting the full spectrum of its work in the non-traditional social and economic fields;

(e) Creating a stable financial base as the Organization prepares for the challenges of the next century.

31. In addition, the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary will provide an opportunity to implement various projects that were recommended in the past but deferred due to lack of funding or support.

32. For example, it has been recommended that the public tour at Headquarters be redesigned to reflect the dynamic nature of the Organization. This would include the addition of modern exhibit facilities and interactive displays.

33. In addition, it has been proposed that the role of the Archives Reference Service as a resource for scholarly research and public information be expanded to include greater community outreach. This would involve updating the facilities with the addition of a study centre, providing stipends for research projects and sponsoring symposia on post-war international issues.

34. Moreover, the possibility of erecting a memorial to United Nations peace-keeping soldiers in the Public Lobby of the General Assembly Building has been discussed for several years. The United Nations may wish to establish the memorial in connection with the Fiftieth Anniversary.

35. In planning for the commemorative events, it is noted that a number of organizations within the United Nations system will celebrate various anniversaries within one year of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United

Nations, including the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Disaster Relief Coordinator, the United Nations Population Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the United Nations Volunteers programme. In addition, 1994 will mark the International Year of the Family, while 1995 will witness the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Social Development Conference and the tenth anniversary of the International Youth Year. In that connection, it is highly recommended that all preparations be coordinated so that programmes and activities for the Fiftieth Anniversary reflect a system-wide celebration.

36. All United Nations information centres have been requested to submit ideas to the Fiftieth Anniversary secretariat for consideration in the country or countries that they serve. Member States may therefore wish to involve the information centres in their preparations for the Anniversary and to communicate to them their plans for commemorative events.

37. A significant amount of work is already in progress for the Fiftieth Anniversary and potential contributors are therefore encouraged to consider an immediate gift to the Trust Fund. A commitment during these preliminary stages in planning will help ensure the development of a significant programme of commemorative events for 1995.

A/AC.
240/
1992/
L.3

UNITED NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
LIMITED

A/AC.240/1992/L.3
19 November 1992

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE
UNITED NATIONS
Second meeting
30 November 1992

PROVISIONAL AGENDA WITH ANNOTATIONS

1. Opening of the meeting.

2. Election of the remaining officers of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

3. Adoption of the agenda.

4. Consideration of activities connected with the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

5. Programme of work of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations.

6. Other matters.

ANNOTATIONS

Item 1. Opening of the meeting

Item 2. Election of remaining officers of the Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

At its 1st meeting, on 22 October 1992, the Preparatory Committee decided to take a decision on the remaining officers of the Committee for Africa and Europe at a later stage, after consultations.

Item 3. Adoption of the agenda

Item 4. Consideration of activities connected with the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations

At its 84th plenary meeting, on 13 April 1992, the General Assembly decided:

(a) To establish a Preparatory Committee for the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, consisting of the members of the General Committee and open to the participation of all Member States;

(b) To entrust the Preparatory Committee with the task of considering and recommending to the General Assembly at its forty-seventh session proposals for suitable activities in connection with the observance of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations, on the understanding that its decisions would be taken by consensus.

On the basis of the above-mentioned decisions, the Committee will be called upon to consider the proposals set forth in section IV.B of document A/AC.240/1992/L.2.

Item 5. Programme of work of the Preparatory Committee

Item 6. Other matters